

A RESOLUTION relative to the reinstatement of Aquatic
Resources Trust Fund monies for boating safety
and education programs.

WHEREAS, the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux) was enacted by the U.S. Congress so that the safety and education of the nation's boaters would receive funding similar to that provided for fish and wildlife programs; and

WHEREAS, Aquatic Resources Trust Fund monies are not general funds, but rather trust funds derived from the tax boaters pay on marine fuel and, therefore, represent a prime example of the user fee concept, i.e. user pays, user benefits; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, these funds have helped to steadily decrease boating fatalities so that the past three years have been the lowest on record; and

WHEREAS, the loss of these funds will be devastating to Tennessee's boating program by reducing the education and enforcement programs by nearly half; and

WHEREAS, the current administration did not ask for these funds as a part of the proposed federal budget, thereby ending an enormously successful program engineered through the cooperative efforts of the American League of Anglers and Boaters, Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Congress, and others; and

WHEREAS, these funds cannot be used for budget deficit reduction but rather will transfer to the Sport Fisheries account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund, thereby bypassing the intent of the enabling legislation; and

WHEREAS, there was bipartisan support in the 103rd Congress in the form of HR 4477 to reinstate this vital funding on a sustained basis; and

WHEREAS, there appears to be movement to address this same boating safety funding dilemma in the early days of the 104th Congress; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That this General Assembly hereby memorializes the United States Congress to enact legislation which would reinstate Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux) monies on a sustained funding basis to assure the continued proven success of Tennessee's, as well as other states', boating safety and education program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit enrolled copies of this resolution to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States, the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives; the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate; and to each member of the Tennessee Congressional delegation.